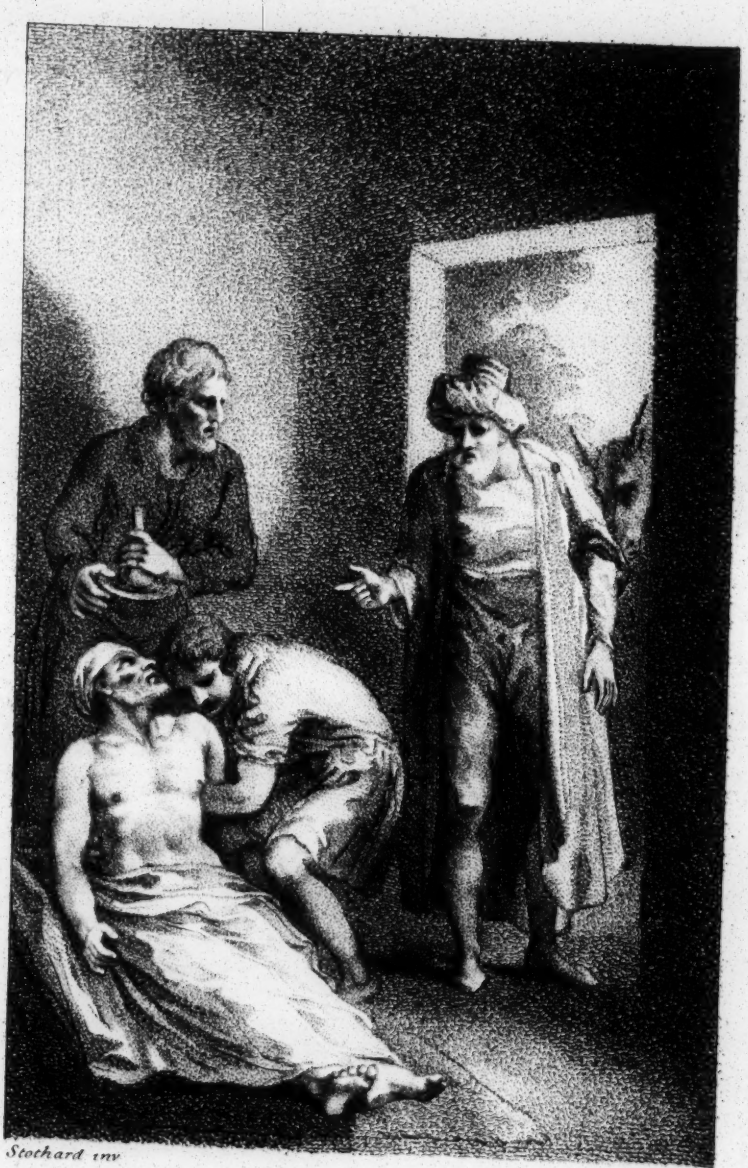


Stothard inv

Strutt sculp.

Take care of him, and ... when I come again, I will repay thee.

Luke Chap. X. Ver. 35.

THE

NECESSITY, UTILITY,

NATURE AND OBJECT

OF A

SOCIETY,

ENTITLED

The Sick Man's Friend.

Instituted in the Year 1784,

For the Purposes of *visiting*, *advising*, and *relieving* the POOR, under the painful and distressing Hours of

SICKNESS.

Supported by the voluntary Contributions of the Pious and Humane.

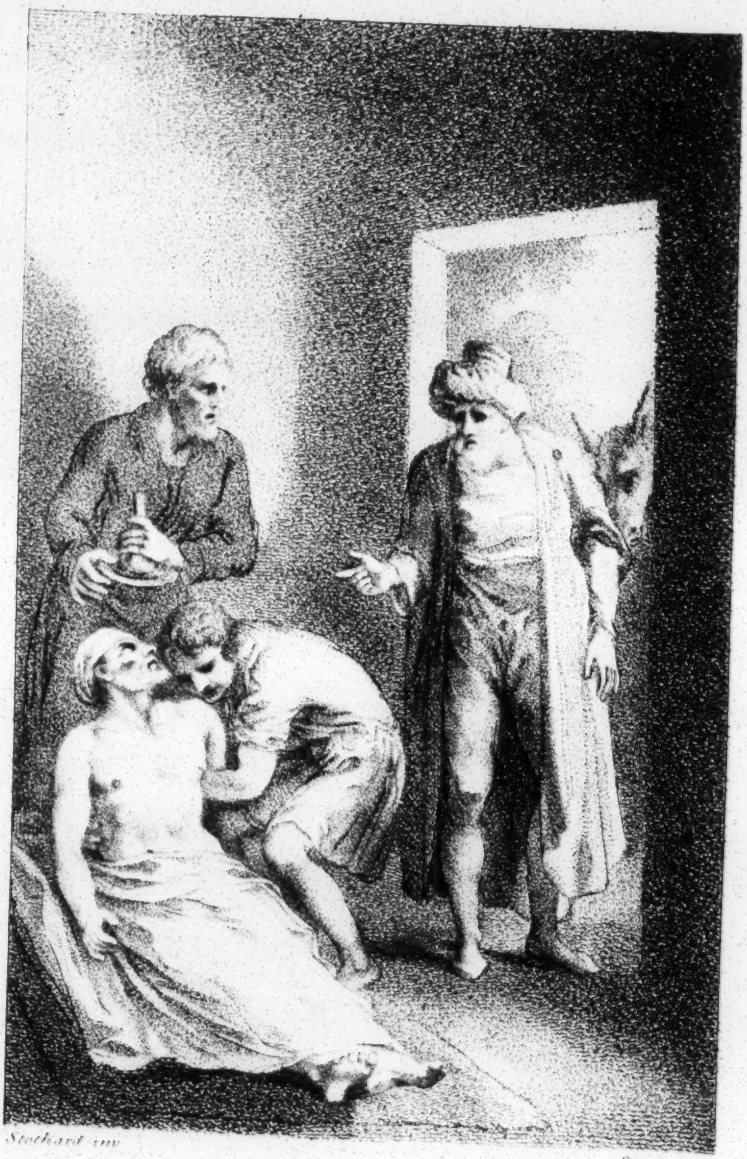
"The Poor ye have always with you."

The LORD JESUS CHRIST.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold for the BENEFIT of the CHARITY.

1786



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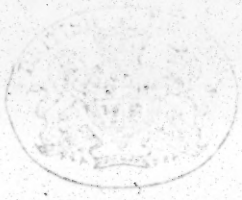

TO THE

FRIENDS and BENEFACTORS

OF THE

SOCIETY,

ENTITLED,

The SICK MAN's FRIEND.

BY the much-lamented death of the late Rev. Dr. Peckwell, the Founder of this Inſtitution, it ſuffered an almoſt irreparable loſs. So great was the loſs conceived at the time to be, that the perſons who are principally concerned in the execution of this deſign, deſpaired of its future ſucceſs, after that melancholly event took place; it being thereby deprived of its Head and chief Support.

But ſuch was the wiſdom of the plan, and of the means adopted by him for carrying it into execution; that, notwithſtanding this event, which threatened the decline, if not the diſſolution of the Society, it has ſuffered no diminution. On the contrary, it is with pleaſure, that the Managers and Stewards of this Inſtitution inform its Friends and Benefactors, that its late ſucceſs has exceeded their moſt ſanguine expectation. Through the divine bleſſing upon the exertions that have been made for its ſupport and continuance, it has increaſed conſiderably in its ſubſcriptions and extenſive utility.

Such is the ardour and zeal with which it is ſupported and carried on at preſent, that it promiſes to be a laſting Memorial of its benevolent Founder; who fell a ſacrifice to the cauſe of humanity, in his endeavours to acquire a further degree of medical knowledge: chiefly with a view of rendering this Charity more extenſively

uſeful;

uſeful; by adminiſtering medicine to its objects, as well as pecuniary aſſiſtance and ſpiritual advice. This loſs, however, is abundantly compenſated, by an annual ſubſcription to the WESTMINSTER DISPENSARY; the Phyſicians, Surgeons, and Apothecary of which exert themſelves, in a more than ordinary manner, in their attention to the objects of this Society; thereby rendering it very eſſential ſervice, and proving that they conſider it as a Siſter-Charity to their own.

It would be injuſtice to the Viſitors of this Society, on whom its beneficial effects principally depend, did not the Managers and Stewards embrace this opportunity, to acknowledge their very material ſervices: as they give up much of their time, and conſtantly exert themſelves with zeal and alacrity, in their compaſſionate attention to the ſeveral objects they viſit; ſolicitous to relieve alike,

their diſordered bodies, their diſtreſſed minds, and their afflicted conſciences: imitating therein their bleſſed Maſter, "who went about doing good." They find their benevolent labours amply compenſated, by the profit they derive from them to their own ſouls, and the heart-felt ſatisfaction they feel, from their being thus inſtrumental of good to others.

The Public have been much benefited by this Society, as their poor have been greatly relieved in many pariſhes. And it muſt be acknowledged, that their liberal contributions, at the ſermons that have been preached for it, have manifeſted the ſenſe they entertain of its great utility. By theſe means, and by annual ſubſcriptions, and occaſional donations, this Inſtitution has been hitherto ſupported: and by the ſame means alone can it, in future, be upheld. Wherefore it is hoped, that the Friends of this Society will not remit their exertions in its favour; but that

that they will excite others, whom God hath bleſſed with affluence, and a ſympathetic heart, to contribute to its ſupport.

Beſides the annual ſubſcriptions and occaſional donations to this Charity, during the laſt two years, the following very liberal collections have been made at the places of worſhip where ſermons have been preached for it. At St. Giles's Church, after a ſermon preached by Dr. Peckwell, was collected the ſum of 66*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.* At St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, after a ſermon by Dr. Peckwell, 37*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* At Orange Street Chapel, after a ſermon, in the morning, by the Rev. Mr. Parſons, 44*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* and in the evening, by the Rev. Mr. Cartwright, 21*l.* 9*s.* making together 66*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.* There have been alſo received, a donation of 20 guineas from a lady in Yorkſhire; a legacy of 15*l.* and the profits of a ſermon, preached on the death of Dr. Peckwell, and publiſhed by the Rev. Mr. Grove,

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Grove, 30*l.* and upwards. Other donations and ſubſcriptions have conſiderably increaſed the receipts of the laſt two years.

The ſcenes of poverty and diſtreſs, which the Viſitors of this Society have witneſſed, are almoſt incredible. Thoſe who live in eaſe and affluence, and never viſit the dreary abodes of the Sick Poor, have no conception of the wretchedneſs of the inhabitants. Common beggars, who walk the ſtreets in rags, and exerciſe their arts to excite compaſſion and extort charity, give no idea what the real poor and truly afflicted ſuffer. Even Hoſpitals afford a very inadequate idea thereof; for the objects relieved in them, have every kind of aſſiſtance and comfort that their caſes admit of or require: while the others are often deſtitute of the ordinary means of ſupport, as well as of medical aſſiſtance. To theſe, therefore, the hand of charity may be ſtretched out,

and

and the heart of ſympathy be exerciſed, in the moſt effectual manner: as they may yield that relief to the pungent ſufferings of the miſerable, which muſt equally gladden the hearts of the ſufferers and of thoſe who relieve them.

To give the reader ſome idea of theſe ſcenes of ſuffering, let one inſtance out of many ſuffice. A family, conſiſting of a man, his wife, and ſix children, lately come from the country, had no ſooner got into a poor habitation, than they were afflicted with a malignant fever; which communicated itſelf from one to another, till the whole were ill of it—without money, without friends, without any ſupport whatever. The neighbours feared to come near them, leſt they ſhould catch the diſorder. In this ſituation, they would in all probability have periſhed, through the want of the common neceſſaries of life, and that aſſiſtance which their diſtreſſes called for. But in this

this their extremity, *The Sick Man's Friend* was directed, by the unerring hand of Providence, to this affecting ſcene of miſery. The Viſitor found the whole family afflicted with the above diſorder, in pining poverty; ſome of them laid on ſtraw; one ſcarcely able to aſſiſt another. Relief was immediately afforded; and continued to be adminiſtered in an ample manner, till they were brought through their affliction, and the man had got into employment; whereby he could provide for his family. Thus were theſe miſerable objects ſaved from periſhing by the timely aſſiſtance of *The Sick Man's Friend.*

For the account of the Receipts and Diſburſements of the years 1786 and 1787, ſee the end of this book.

LONDON, MARCH 11, 1788.

THE

SICK MAN'S FRIEND.

THE unequal diſtributions of Providence afford the benevolent conſtant opportunities of expreſſing their gratitude. Miſery, in a variety of ſhapes, is continually preſented to the eye of compaſſion, that men may be excited to follow his example, who poured wine and oil into the wounds of an unfortunate traveller.

Poverty, itſelf, in the extreme, no ſmall affliction, has been allotted to great num-

bers of the human race. It is frequently as impoſſible to be foreſeen as to be prevented. It ſometimes befals the induſtrious, and attends the latter years of the formerly affluent. Job has not been the only man who has remembered in the depth of poverty, that it was once in his power "to deliver the poor that cried, "the fatherleſs, and him that had none to "help him; and to cauſe the widow to "ſing for joy." There are few under ſuch trials and reflexions but will alſo add with him, "Oh! that it were as in months "paſt, in the days when God preſerved "me, and his candle (of affluence, proſ-"perity and peace) ſhined upon my "head!"

On the inſtability of all ſublunary good, humanity grounds an exhortation to her children to remember, that, in relieving the diſtreſs of others to-day, they only do, what,

what, to-morrow, they themſelves may require from another hand.

Not to blunt the ſenſibility, deaden the voice, or oppoſe the purſuit of the humane, is Chriſtianity ſent down from Heaven. It comes to give permanency to theſe principles, and efficacy to this purſuit. It quickens ſenſibility, extends charity, and directs both. It diſcovers the ſource, nature, and tendency of every trial. It tells us that "riches make themſelves wings "and fly away;" that proſperity and adverſity are the ſervants of God; that he ſaith to one, "Go, and he goeth; and "to another, Come, and he cometh."

It exhorts its followers to "caſt their "care upon the Lord; whatever their "hands find to do, to do it with all their "might; in beſtowing alms and doing "good, to give, not *grudgingly*, becauſe "God loveth a chearful giver:" not

par-

partially, becauſe " our father who is in " Heaven, maketh his ſun to riſe on the " evil and on the good; and ſendeth his " rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt:" not *intereſtedly*, becauſe " freely we have re- " ceived, and therefore freely ought to " give:" not *Phariſaically* or *oſtentati- ouſly*, for if they thus " beſtow all their " goods to feed the poor, it profiteth " them nothing."

Sickneſs and pain united with poverty become formidable enemies. They allow no reſt by night, no comfort by day. What an emaciated body requires, poverty cannot afford. The labour which poverty ſtands in need of, ſickneſs and pain deny. The pittance, which induſtry had collected together, is ſoon gone; and the poor, ſick man, looks upon his family, as haſtening to the ſame place by hunger and penury, to which he is hurrying by ſickneſs and pain. The only refuge is

God.

God. But ignorance of the truth is too generally a companion of poverty. The ſick poor are as wretchedly deſtitute of the " bread which endureth to eternal life," as of that which periſheth. Every plan for their relief ſhould, therefore, include inſtruction. The dying man ſhould be led to a dying Saviour, and the drooping ſoul be adviſed to look at that " Lamb " who takes away the ſins of the world."

Men are taught to conſider ſickneſs as a meſſenger from Heaven—a memento of mortality—a voice crying in the wilderneſs, " Prepare to meet thy God." The meritorious cauſe is ſin. It is ſent to try ſome, chaſtiſe others, puniſh the wicked, and eventually glorify God. Hence it, as well as other trials, falls indiſcriminately to the lot of all; and no man can learn, whether he has found favour with God, from the diſpenſations of his Pro-

Providence. It muſt be learned from the revelation of his will.

To render the ſick beds of poverty leſs diſtreſſing, and more uſeful to the poor--- to prevent the ruinous debts which generally follow their diſeaſes, and curb, if not put a ſtop to, the ſucceſs of every endeavour after future proviſion for their family --- to inſtruct and ſupport their minds, that pain may be ſanctified, and ſickneſs profitable --- to diſpenſe charity with leſs impoſition, and greater efficacy, is this Society formed.

Its objects are indiſcriminately the ſick poor. Its motives, gratitude to our God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and love to man for his ſake. Its means of conveying both inſtruction and relief, honeſt men, who voluntarily and gratuitouſly viſit the habitations of the poor, enquire into the nature and degree of their diſtreſs, read

a portion

a portion of God's word, unite in prayer with the ſick, and relieve them with money, or bread, or cloaths, or recommendations to diſpenſaries and hoſpitals as neceſſity may require.

By indiſcriminately relieving the ſick poor, the fatal effects of bigotry and ſect are deſtroyed; the uncandid and uncharitable enquiry, "Are you of Paul? "Are you of Apollos?" buried in oblivion. Exceptions no longer ariſe from the garb of miſery, or the ſentiments of the diſtreſſed. Whatever his ſentiments may be, ours are *to relieve with all our hearts.*

Notwithſtanding perſons who are maimed or afflicted with *chronic* diſorders, as ſuch, cannot be relieved by a charity, which neither intends, nor is capable of granting penſions or annuities; yet, whenever paroxyſms of their diſorders, or attacks from acute diſeaſes render them

leſs capable of providing for themſelves, or of ſubſiſting upon their uſual ſupplies, they are by no means exempted from every aſſiſtance that can be afforded by The Sick Man's Friend.

The goodneſs of God in diſcovering the riches of his grace to ſome of the moſt ignorant, in the awful hour of their diſtreſs, has greatly added to the comfort, and encouragement of the worthy men, who devote the time they can ſpare to this laudable undertaking; and refreſhed the hearts both of the ſtewards, and benefactors, who have heard their accounts of it.

The relief that has been afforded to the ſick has been ſubſtantial. Would to God the ſupplies were as permanent as they are

* Many written accounts of this nature, are now in my poſſeſſion. If they ſhould increaſe in number and importance, ſome future period will, probably, introduce them to the public Eye.

are at preſent ample and uſeful! The influx of voluntary contribution is unſtable. It is, therefore, much to be wiſhed that ſome fund could be eſtabliſhed, or ſubſcriptions regularly depended upon, that might render future proſpects leſs precarious, and the hopes of the charitable better founded. To the ſame Providence, however, which has determined that "the poor ſhall not ceaſe out of the land," are they, and whatever is neceſſary for their ſupport, to be confided. May God's will be done!

Let me exhort the ſons of men not to reſtrain the bowels of their compaſſion, or ſhut up their tender mercies. The *Sick Man's Friend* ſolicits the ample aſſiſtance of the affluent, as well as the mite of the widow. It ſtands in need of the wiſdom of the prudent, and the labour of the active. The efforts of the man of buſineſs muſt be united with the gifts of the

man of prayer, to adminiſter the relief which it demands. The painful and dangerous moments of women, in the hour of nature's ſorrow, call for the aſſiſtance of their own ſex; and aſk, if there are none who can ſpeak a word of comfort, and unite in prayer with an afflicted mind, when they bring ſupport to a weak mother and a helpleſs child.

The human heart was never more expanded by ſympathy and ſentiment than at preſent. The principles of evangelic truth have diffuſed a ſpirit through the world which rejoices in mitigating the ſufferings, and alleviating the ſorrows of mankind: but it ungratefully forgets the "rock from whence it was hewn," and the ſource from which it ſprung. It pretends to an origin in the human heart, whereas, nature unenlightened by revelation, has ever been uncivilized in things the moſt important to ſociety; and, ſanctioned

oned as virtues, ſome of the moſt abhorrent crimes *.

Let us acknowledge that the beſt privileges we enjoy, have ariſen from the gracious fountain of evangelic truth. The beſt knowledge we poſſeſs, has been brought to light by the Goſpel.

Let us not forget the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet, for our ſakes, he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.

Let us enquire how dwelleth the love of God in him, who, having this world's good, and ſeeing his brother have need, ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him.

Let us remember that neither our compaſſion or labour will be in vain or forgotten;

* See Biſhop Gibſon's Paſtoral Letters.

gotten; for when Chriſt ſhall come to judge the world, he will own, whatever was done for his ſake, as done to himſelf. He will ſay,

"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me; I WAS SICK, AND YE VISITED ME; I was in priſon, and ye came unto me."

On theſe principles, Dr. PECKWELL takes the liberty of moſt earneſtly intreating the generous, reſpectable, and affluent, to grant the aſſiſtance of their *labor*, as well as their *ſubſtance*. Only two hours in a month are requeſted. Theſe among twelve ſtewards will ſupply the whole year; and guard the fund, character, and diſtributions of the Society, from miſtake and miſrepreſentation.

If nature be reluctant to the taſk, let it conſider that the ſituation of the diſtreſſed, may very ſoon become its own. Sickneſs and death can neither be bribed nor withſtood. No ſhield can guard, no eloquence perſuade. Theſe arrows fly by day; theſe terrors ſtrike by night: we can neither ſee nor eſcape them. Youthful ſtrength is no privilege, a good conſtitution no ſecurity. The artillery of Heaven, like the God who directs it, no reſpecter of perſons.

If a chriſtian mind be indolent, let it review the life and ſufferings of its adorable maſter. Did he ſpare himſelf, his time, his life? No: many weary ſteps did he take, many ſorrowful hours did he ſpend, much pain did he undergo, till death terminated his ſufferings, that the ſickneſſes of the mind might be healed, and all its wounds bound up. Wilt thou, O Chriſtian, deny thy mite, or a few hours

of thy time, to his ſick, diſtreſſed poor? Does not his love conſtrain thee? Art thou not bound by the tendereſt ties of affection and gratitude, to glorify his name? O thou, who art redeemed by his blood, called by his grace, and kept by his power, thro' faith, to ſalvation; what doth the Lord require of *thee*, but to do juſtly, *to love mercy*, and walk humbly with thy God?

Charlotte-ſtreet,
Portland-place, 1784.

THE END.

ADDENDA

To a PAMPHLET, entitled,

The Neceſſity, &c. of the Sick Man's Friend.

THE publication of the preceding Tract has been delayed, in order to aſcertain by larger experience, and recommend with greater confidence, the utility of *The Sick Man's Friend.* Some of the accounts, referred to in the 10th page, are now added, that the Benefactors to this Charity may unite, with the Stewards and Viſitors, in gratitude to HIM, who

pardons the guilty, relieves the diſtreſſed, and comforts departing ſouls—to HIM, *who loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*; and has manifeſted to ſome of our poor fellow-creatures the depths of his mercy, and power of his grace.

The accounts were delivered to the Author in Letters, and they are laid before the Publick unaltered in ſubſtance, yet, in ſome meaſure, curtailed in expreſſion; not ſo much, however, as to injure their ſimplicity, or in any degree detract from their authenticity. They are the genuine teſtimony of honeſt men, who have experienced, and ſeen the happy effects of the grace of God.

The Letters are accompanied with ſome remarks, which are intended to elucidate the facts, confirm the truth of the principles, and recommend the ſick Poor to the

the compaſſion and protection of mankind. It will be perceived that, where any have obtained a ſenſe of pardon, peace, joy, reſignation in trial, victory in temptation, or triumph in death, it has been aſcribed to the goodneſs and grace of God our Saviour, and acknowledged to be *the fruits of his Spirit* *; and, throughout, whoſoever has been, in the ſmalleſt degree, bleſſed with *the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt*, is eſteemed a Chriſtian: nor, is it doubted, that *Bleſſed are the dead, who die in the Lord*, for they reſt from their labours, and enter into his joy.

* Gal. v. 22.

LETTER I.

REV. SIR,

ABOUT ſeven or eight weeks ago I was called to viſit a young woman who had ſpent her life in pleaſures and vanity; ſhe was very much reduced in her circumſtances, very ill, and under great concern to know *what ſhe ſhould do to be ſaved.*— I viſited, and was enabled to pray by her three or four times, and directed her to truſt in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the only Saviour for loſt, undone ſinners. I then recommended her to another Viſitor, who often prayed by her, and relieved her. She has been attended by us ever ſince, but continned under much concern about her immortal ſoul, 'till three or four days ago; when God was pleaſed to ſend, we hope by his holy Spirit, peace to her ſoul, with

with theſe words: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* She then broke out into ſinging

Lo! glad I come; and thou, dear Lamb,
Shall take me to thee as I am.
Nothing but ſin I thee can give;
Yet help me, and thy praiſe I live.

Afterwards, this promiſe gave her great comfort: *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* She is now happy *, rejoicing in the Lord, and longing to be gone. She deſires to return thanks to Almighty God, for his great mercy; and to the Society, called The Sick Man's Friend, for the benefit ſhe has received from it.

A. B. Viſitor.

* Happy on a dying bed! how enviable! how much to be wiſhed for!—— Thanks be to that God, *who is willing that*

that the heirs of promiſe ſhould have ſtrong conſolation! Thanks to that God, who has ſaid, *Let the righteous be glad; let them greatly, and always rejoice.*

Having learned that *it would be better for her to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt*, ſhe longed to be gone.—Reader! ſeek the ſame ſalvation. The promiſes, bleſſings, peace, and joy will be your's.

LETTER II.

REV. SIR,

WE think it our duty, as well as our privilege, to acquaint you of the Lord's delivering a poor man from great darkneſs of ſoul, and great trials, by the feeble attempts of two of the Viſitors for the Charity, called The Sick Man's Friend. It was the firſt Lord's Day after the Society was formed. When we went

in,

in, after ſome converſation, we enquired into the ſtate of his ſoul; at which he pauſed, and ſaid, *the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure; having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* We went to prayer, and truly it was a bleſſed time. I called about three or four nights afterwards to ſee him. On going in, both himſelf and wife burſt into tears, and ſaid, "we wanted to ſee you, or to know where you lived. O bleſſed be God, ſaid he, for this ſeaſonable time of the Lord's deliverance out of my darkneſs and diſtreſs!" From that time, 'till his departure, which was the 24th of June laſt, (1785), he was enabled to look on death as without a ſting; praiſing God, to the comfort of many who called to ſee him. He was a Chriſtian who loved and read his Bible, and his meditation on it was ſweet. The thirty-fourth Pſalm * was a pleaſant field to him; he ſpoke much of it. He was, in general, one of very few words,

words, but ſaid what was very much to the purpoſe. Being once in deep diſtreſs, with a temptation of the enemy, concerning the decrees of God, and thinking that it was in vain for him to pray, as every thing was ſettled, he was delivered from it, by conſidering *He never ſaid, to the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye my face in vain.*

His widow deſires to return thanks for the help, ſpiritual and temporal, unto the Lord, and the Society ‡ called The Sick Man's Friend.

* How ſweetly does Dr. Watts expreſs the feelings of this departing ſoul!

When threat'ning ſorrows round me ſtood,
And endleſs fears aroſe,
Like the loud billows of a flood,
Redoubling all my woes;

I told the Lord my ſore diſtreſs,
With heavy groans and tears—
He gave my ſharpeſt torments eaſe,
And ſilenc'd all my fears.

O ſin-

O ſinners come and taſte his love,
Come learn his pleaſant ways;
And let your own experience prove
The ſweetneſs of his grace.

WATTS, Pſ. 34.

‡ While others ſeek the *honour* that cometh from men, and are elated by the *applauſe* of their fellow-creatures; grant, O God! that the *bleſſing of him, that is ready to periſh*, may come upon the bene-factors to the Sick Man's Friend, and that *they may cauſe the widow's heart to be thankful!*

LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

A Young man, a ſoldier*, 28 years of age, called by the Goſpel, about three years ago, at the New Way Chapel

in Weſtminſter, being in dying circumſtances, applied to the Sick Man's Friend, and was viſited laſt Friday and relieved, being poor, and under great concern about his ſoul. Laſt night the Lord was pleaſed to ſhew him, by deep conviction, more of the "ſinfulneſs of ſin," and the dreadful torments of deſtruction. He cried for mercy ‡. This morning I called upon him again. He told me he had found peace, and that Jeſus Chriſt had delivered him from his great diſtreſs. He is now expecting every hour to die, and begs your prayers. He wanted to tell me much more about *what the Lord had done for him*, but was not able, being very low and weak.

* We read in the divine hiſtory of a pious centurion, and a devout ſoldier. To *endure hardneſs as good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus*, will neither damp their courage, nor injure their profeſſion. To poſſeſs

poſſeſs that peace which the world cannot deſtroy, will be the beſt defence againſt the fears of death; and render them more valiant, though leſs raſh, even at the cannon's mouth.

‡ O let it be known from pole to pole, that *there is no God like unto thee, O God our Saviour! who delighteth in mercy.* And from the riſing to the ſetting ſun, may loſt men adopt this plea:

" Mercy, good Lord! mercy I aſk,
This is the total ſum;
For mercy, Lord! is all my ſuit,
O let thy mercy come."

LITURGY.

LETTER IV.

REV. SIR,

THE Sick Man's Friend is deſired to accept of the humble and ſincere thanks of a poor woman, whom we

have reaſon to hope went to glory laſt Monday. She had been relieved about two months. When ſhe was firſt viſited, ſhe appeared to have heard the Goſpel, but knew little of the power of it. We pointed to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as the only hope of ſalvation. She ſeemed deſirous to reſt upon him, and in our late viſits her heart was much affected. With weeping eyes ſhe has often declared, that Jeſus Chriſt was precious, very precious!* As her diſorder increaſed, believing her approach to death very near, and conſidering it as a mercy that ſhe was not parted from her dear huſband and darling child, in that painful hour, ſhe broke out with a degree of inexpreſſible gratitude, and moſt earneſtly requeſted her dying thanks might be made known to the Society, who had ſo kindly aſſiſted her. She then commended her poor huſband to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and begged to ſee and take

leave

leave of her dear child, who had been juſt put out of the room during the mother's dreadful agony; and then ſaid, "Lord relieve me! O precious Chriſt!" and died immediately.

* This language is proper and expreſſive. To David *the loving kindneſs of the Lord* was precious. So, to Peter was *the blood of Chriſt—Chriſt himſelf*—the *promiſes of God*, and the *faith* he had endued him with. Is Chriſt, and the graces of his Spirit leſs needful? If not, can they be leſs valuable?

Whoever may ſay,

"He hath no form, nor any beauty that we ſhould regard him;

"Nor is his countenance ſuch, that we ſhould deſire him;"

Lowth's Iſaiah, c. liii.

I deſire to unite with this dying ſoul, and hope that my laſt moments will be a practical comment upon Peter's aſſertion; *To them that believe he is precious.*

LETTER V.

REV. SIR,

J. B. a Black *, was firſt viſited by the Society, about the beginning of May laſt. Being aſked what ſtate his ſoul was in? his anſwer was, I know not what you mean. Did you never go to hear a ſermon or go to church? No!— I then explained to him his ſtate, and pointed out his refuge; aſſured him that all nations were alike before God; and, deſired him to beg of God to give him his Spirit. Repeating and explaining theſe words to him, Mat. vii. v. 7 *Aſk, and it ſhall be given you; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you*, &c. to the end of the 11th verſe, I prayed that he might be *convinced of ſin and of righteouſneſs*; and beſought him to pray, that he might feel his need of a Saviour. He ſaid, I will.

In

In the next viſit he was aſked if he had prayed, or if he remembered what had been ſaid to him? He replied, No, but I aſk my wife, and ſhe tells me. I exhorted him to conſider his danger, and to beg of God to give him a ſincere heart, that he might *believe and repent*. He ſaid, I will, I will. At other times ſince he has ſaid, I pray to the Lord Jeſus. What do you pray to him for? That he may forgive me my ſins; and I pray to Jeſus for my bad thoughts. And do you think he will forgive? Yes! *his blood* (you ſay) *cleanſeth from all ſin* (*). After this he ſpoke about being baptized. I aſked if *with his heart he did believe on the Lord Jeſus?* I do, ſays he. If the Lord ſhould now call you by death to ſtand at his bar, do you think you ſhall be ſaved? Yes, I do. How can you be ſaved? Jeſus will ſave me. I told him then to be eaſy about his baptiſm, which was impoſſible in his ſituation, for if he believed

(*) 1 John i. v. 7.

believed with his heart he would be ſaved, and referred him to the Thief on the Croſs. He ſeemed ſatisfied. The next day he was very bad, and prayed frequently. At night he prayed a long time, and ſaid, The Lord Jeſus will ſave me, He will ſave me. Lord, receive me. The next morning he ſent for me, but I was not at home. He died about eleven o'clock. His wife told me, that when he could not ſpeak, he lifted up his arms with his eyes to heaven, as if agonizing in his ſoul, and ſo ended this life.

* So does *Ethiopia ſtretch out her hands to God.* Pſ. 68. 31. The Treaſurer of that great kingdom, in the early ages of Chriſtianity, enquired who he was that had been *led like a ſheep to the ſlaughter, and like a lamb, dumb before the ſhearer, ſo opened he not his mouth. Philip preached unto him* JESUS. Acts viii. 35. And in Jeſus he found redemption and peace.

In

In colour and in country theſe men agree, but in other circumſtances greatly differ. The one was great, the other mean—one rich, the other poor.—Candace's Treaſurer was learned—reading the Bible—ſeeking after knowledge, and the interpretation of divine Truth, even when fluſhed with propſerity and health. The penſioner of the Sick Man's Friend was illiterate; ignorant of the Bible; not ſeeking ſaving knowledge—in the depth of adverſity, and upon the brink of the grave. If a learned Commentator can cry out, with rapturous gratitude, of the former;—"Behold the ſanctifying grace of God, "waſhing a blackmoor white, and making "an Ethiopian clean!" what ſhall I ſay of this inſtance of divine goodneſs! O! the depths of God's mercy! the extent of his grace! who thus viſits the habitations of poverty, ignorance and diſeaſe, with his pardoning love!

LETTER VI.

REV. SIR,

I WAS ſent to E. M. of B. St. I found her ill, (in conſequence of a lying-in) with two ſmall children, and her huſband out of employment. She was entirely ignorant of God, and his method of ſalvation. After explaining the nature of the Society, that it was not only its intention to relieve the body, but uſe means of convincing perſons of the deplorable ſtate of their ſouls, before that God at whoſe bar I thought ſhe muſt very ſhortly appear, I had ſome converſation with her on the pleaſing ſubject of our Lord and Saviour, in whom, alone, a poor ſinner can be juſtified before God the Father. I concluded in prayer, and it was a comfortable opportunity. Well may we at times ſing

Bleſt

Bleſt be the Father, and his Love,
To whoſe cœleſtial ſource we owe
Rivers of endleſs joys above,
And ſtreams of comfort here below.

I continued my viſits for ſome time, in which ſhe gave many proofs that the Lord had been graciouſly pleaſed to begin a work of grace * upon her heart. I then delivered the Letter to another, who viſited her two or three times: he declared, he had never ſeen a perſon more humble under a ſenſe of the Lord's ſparing her, and not cutting her off in her ſins. I then viſited her again. She ſeemed to have an increaſing ſenſe of her own miſery, as a loſt ſinner, declaring how good the Lord was to her, inaſmuch as he had not taken her before, and ſuffered her to go to the grave with all her ſins unpardoned; ſtill magnifying, praiſing and bleſſing HIM who redeemed her ſoul from hell. I have ſeen many perſons in diſtreſs

and pain, but never ſaw one bear it with a more thankful heart. The Lord was pleaſed to ſhew her her own miſerable ſtate by nature, and I truſt he alſo applied the Balm of Gilead to heal her ſoul. A Chriſtian Friend employed her huſband, and, it being thought that her own country air would be of ſervice to her, ſome friends were procured to aſſiſt her and her infant on their journey. I parted with her here, in firm expectation of meeting her, where the Lord's people ſhall part no more. It pleaſed the Lord, as ſoon as ſhe got into the country, to take her infant, who always lay (next to her ſoul's concern) neareſt her heart. She grew worſe, and in a few days left a dying teſtimony, that the Lord was gracious to her in her laſt moments.

* Among the numbers who have been viſited and relieved by this Society, we have not a few to rejoice over, as being brought

brought in at the eleventh hour, and ſaved almoſt in the moments of diſſolution.

There is language in this Letter, exceptionable to the unbelieving heart, and Phariſaic eye. I mean, *a work of grace*, and giving *proofs of that work*. Let us conſider its neceſſity, reality, and evidence; and then, inſtead of quibbling at the terms, ſeek the bleſſing, and adore the Giver.

The doctrine of the Bible is, that we cannot rightly know ourſelves, or ſavingly the things of God—cannot think a good thought, or do a good action, without the influence of God's Spirit. And, he is ſaid to enlighten our minds, and to produce faith, repentance, and deſires and ſtrength to do, and ſuffer the will of God. The change which produces theſe, in order to be expreſſive, and conciſe, we call *a work of Grace*, or *of God*; and when they appear, eſteem them *proofs of that work*; and theſe proofs are ſaid to be

a teſ-

teſtimony given of God, Acts xiv. 3; which may be *ſeen of men*, Acts xi. 23. After this, I hope if theſe good men, in future Letters, ſhould ſpeak of *a work of Grace, giving proofs of it*, or *ſeeing it*, they will not be miſunderſtood. And I recommend thoſe, who ſtumble at this language, to conſult the following paſſages of God's truth*, and their own Liturgy; as well as the ſentiments and feelings of their own hearts.

* John vi. 28, 29. 2 Cor. xv. 10. Eph. ii. 1 Cor. c. ii. Of the 39 Art. ſee 10th and 12th. Col. for Eaſter-Day, and firſt Sunday after Trinity.

LETTER VII.

THE following is an account of a work of grace (I truſt) on R. W. above 98 years of age, who was viſited and

and relieved four or five weeks ago, by the Sick Man's Friend. When ſhe was aſked, if ſhe knew how matters ſtood between God and her ſoul; and, as ſhe hoped to be ſaved, what was the ground of her hope; her reply was, ſhe never in all her life wronged any body, in word or deed. I endeavoured to convince her how much ſhe was deceived. I endeavoured to ſhew her the nature, and extent of the law; and explained to her the mercy and grace of the Goſpel: telling her, that ſhe was altogether wrong, in hoping for ſalvation by her own doings; and, that there was no ſalvation for poor guilty ſinners, but in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Well, ſaid ſhe, if I am wrong, I hope you will ſet me right. After praying with her, I left her, begging of her to look and go to Jeſus, as a poor ſinner, for ſalvation; and he would grant it her; for he *came to ſeek and to ſave the loſt.* Next day, I was told, ſhe ſpoke a good deal

deal about what was ſaid to her, and longed to hear more. The day after I went. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſtretched out her poor old withered arms, and took hold of my hand; and, when I aſked her how ſhe was, being very weak and full of pain, ſhe could only tell me, ſhe was a poor ſinner, and that ſhe never thought ſo much of Jeſus Chriſt in all her life before. Some days after, being aſked, if ſhe believed the Lord was able and willing to ſave her, ſhe replied, I find Chriſt a comfort to my heart: I truſt in Chriſt, and if he cannot ſave me, none can.

Laſt Saturday evening, when talking to her of the boundleſs love of Chriſt, in taking our nature to do, ſuffer and die for ſinners; ſhe ſpoke out as loud as ſhe could, and ſaid twice over, it is great love indeed! great love! that he ſhould ſhed his blood for ſuch a ſinner as me.—One night, after having been at prayer with her, ſhe ſaid, God bleſs you, all

theſe things I do want.————This woman was viſited again when an hundred years old *, and a very little while before her death. Her converſation at that time is briefly ſtated to have been this.—

I love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt who died for my ſins, he has loved me, and will take me to himſelf by-and-by, for I feel him in my very heart comforting me. Notwithſtanding ſhe was exerciſed with excruciating pains of body, even then, ſhe would ſay, ſhe felt Chriſt precious to her ſoul. Being aſked, not long before ſhe died, now long ſhe had found him ſo precious, ſhe ſaid, only ſince I have been viſited by the Sick Man's Friend. She was removed out of town at Chriſtmas laſt, becauſe her daughter, with whom ſhe lodged, could not keep the houſe any

longer. I hear that ſhe died *praying to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Having ſeen her loving ſpirit, her patience, and reſignation to the will of God, in her ſufferings, I think there is no doubt but ſhe is now praiſing the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in glory.

* *Sanctified* (or ſet apart) *by God the Father, preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus, and called.* Jude, v. 1. preſerved amidſt darkneſs and prejudice, in a world full of vanity, ſin and danger, for near one hundred years, by his providence, who had ſeparated her for his glory—his mercy, who had redeemed her with his blood—and his guarguardian care, who, waiting to be gracious, in the fulneſs of time, when her years were many, her hairs grey, her ſubſtance conſumed, her labour over, her ſtrength decreaſed, her body tottering on the grave, and her ſpirit ready to depart, takes off the things of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſhews them to her ſoul. John xvi. 14, 15.

Did

Did ever long-ſuffering and patience appear in brighter colours? Have they been lately extended to a greater length? When habits of ignorance muſt have grown obſtinate, prejudice become indurated, and old age appear to ſanction the falſe hopes that had been embraced for ſo many years, who could have thought of ſuch a change? O! the depth of the riches, of the patience, mercy and grace of our God; *How unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out.*

This poor woman lived ſome time to ſhew her gratitude to Him who thus *called her from darkneſs into his wonderful light.* —When brought again to a bed of ſickneſs, which terminated in her death, ſhe found the ſame ſupport, and reſted, as the dying king of Iſrael did, on *a covenant well ordered in all things, and ſure.*

This account was given by a perſon who recovered; and in returning thanks, ſtated her views and change of ſentiments as follows.

WHEN I was taken ill, I was deſtitute of any ſenſe of the things of God, until ſome of the Viſitors of the Society, called The Sick Man's Friend, were ſent to me. I then began to have ſome ſerious thoughts about my ſtate before God, but could not come to any perſuaſion of my intereſt in Chriſt. After this I was worſe, and convulſed, though at times ſenſible. I thought ſometimes of the exhortations of thoſe that came to viſit me, and wondered why they made ſo much ado about religion. The enemy of my ſoul endeavoured to perſuade me, that there was no need of taking thought about ſalvation; that we might go on any how, and Chriſt would ſave us at laſt, notwith-

withſtanding all. But this did not laſt long. I began to be very much caſt down about my ſtate, and to fear that I never had any experience. After I grew better, it was ſuggeſted to my mind, that there was no mercy for me; that God had ſhut out my prayers, and would no more have compaſſion on me. I was at a ſtand, and knew not what to do; but bleſſed be God, who kept me from ſpeaking, what Satan would have me, who *was a lyar from the beginning*. Preſently after I was enabled to caſt my ſoul upon Chriſt, ſink or ſwim, and then I found relief. My pain of mind began to go away. The 4th, 5th, and 6th verſes of the 53d chap. of Iſaiah, were brought to my mind with ſome comfort *. I repeated the verſes to thoſe that were with me, and ſung

Praiſe God, from whom all bleſſings flow,
Praiſe him all creatures here below;
Praiſe him above, ye heav'nly hoſt!
Praiſe Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt!

Since

Since that time I have known what it is to have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And I deſire to

" Praiſe him for all that is paſt,
" And truſt him for all that's to come."

And alſo to return the Society thanks for their timely relief, Godly exhortations, and prayers.

* Lowth's Iſaiah, v. 5. " The chaſtiſement by which our peace is effected, was laid upon him.

V. 6. " — Jehovah hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all.

V. 7. " It was exacted, and he was made anſwerable."

Biſhop Lowth by this tranſlation has made theſe paſſages more clear and more expreſſive. When divine Juſtice exacted payment, the Lord Jeſus paid the whole. He is therefore our ſurety, our refuge, our peace.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

REV. SIR,

I SEND you an account of the goodneſs of God towards J. V. whom I viſited, from the Sick Man's Friend, about nine weeks. The four firſt, I laboured to convince him of his ſin, and the danger of his ſtate, and intreated him to flee to Chriſt, the only Saviour from the wrath to come But all I ſaid ſeemed like water caſt upon the ſtones, that left little or no effect. The trees of the garden and the fig-leaves were his refuge *, 'till God was pleaſed to afflict him with great pain of body, and at the ſame time to bring all his ſins as an heavy burthen upon his conſcience; ſo that he thought he was undone; and juſt ready to periſh. He told me that he confeſſed his ſin before God, and prayed to him in the time

of

of his trouble, and he heard him and delivered him from his condemnation, and gave him peace and comfort in his ſoul. I believe this conſolation never left him 'till his death. From that time he always ſaid he ſhould not live; and when his old friends came to ſee him and told him that he would get better, he would ſhew a diſlike to ſuch views. He daily read the word of God as long as he was able. His diſorder was a decline, and toward the laſt he was afflicted with great pain; and one night he told me, that though he was full of violent pains throughout his whole body, that it was nothing to the comfort he had in his ſoul, and that it was of little concern to him what he ſuffered in his body. Another night, the laſt time that I ſaw him, ſpeaking of death, I ſaid to him, are you not afraid to meet the King of Terrors? No! he ſaid.—— What! not afraid to ſtand before the Judge, to receive your ſentence?—No! ſaid

ſaid he, I truſt in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the promiſes, ſo that I have no fear about the matter. If ever I ſaw a ſoul on the ſuburbs of heaven, it was this †. His eyes flowing with tears, the joy of his ſoul ſhining in his face; his tongue telling of the goodneſs of God; in ſaving him a poor ſinner; and ſaying, I ſhould never have come to Chriſt, if I had not ſeen myſelf periſhing without him.——Thus happily he died.

* It muſt be remembered that our guilty firſt parents *hid themſelves from the preſence of* GOD, *amongſt the trees in the garden* of Eden; Gen. c. iii. v. 8. and that they attempted to cover their ſhame with fig-leaves. Hence this figurative language has been often uſed, to expreſs the attempts of conſcious guilt, and the miſerable ſhifts which wretched mortals make, who know not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or his atoning blood. The voice

of the Lord, however, is a mighty voice. And the cry of *Adam! where art thou?* has reached the ear and heart, not only of the guilty parent, but numbers of his no leſs guilty children; and has been followed with ſimilar diſcoveries of his mercy and goodneſs. A trembling mortal, having found favour with him on a dying bed, can ſing

† Thy mercy is more than a match for my heart,
Which wonders to feel its own hardneſs depart;
Diſſolv'd by thy preſence I fall to the ground,
And weep to the praiſe of the mercy I've found.

Thy mercy in Jeſus exempts me from hell;
Of thy mercy I'll ſing, of thy mercy I'll tell:
'Twas JESUS, my friend, when he hung on the tree,
That open'd the channel of mercy for me.

LETTER IX.

REV. SIR,

J. L. lived in N. ſtreet, and was viſited by me, and relieved from the Sick Man's Friend for ſome time. I found him deſtitute of any experimental knowledge of the Truth, notwithſtanding he had read a great deal, and many books. When I aſked him concerning the Lord Jeſus, he ſaid, that he died for ſinners, and all mankind, ſo that he hoped, among the reſt, with his prayers and endeavours, to be ſaved at laſt. I told him that he was building his hopes of ſalvation upon the ſand, which would not ſupport him in the day when God ſhould judge the quick and dead by Jeſus Chriſt. I aſſured him that *hiſtorical* faith was not *ſaving* faith; and as to his endeavours and prayers, they could not make an

atonement for the leaſt of his ſins; that he muſt know, and truſt in the Lord Jeſus for himſelf; that it was the work of the Spirit of God to convince of ſin, and bring ſinners to the Lord Jeſus for peace, pardon, and ſpiritual life in him; and that true believers in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt were *born from above*, and know and feel, that no other help but his, can ſave them *. He replied, he never had known nor experienced theſe things, but ſtill he ſhould pray and do his endeavours. Do, ſaid I, God has commanded us to pray, to repent, to love him with our whole hearts, and to keep his commandments, but theſe are not our Chriſt. To truſt to them, inſtead of Chriſt, is *going about to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs*, and draw down the wrath of God upon us, as it did upon the Jews, who crucified the Lord of Glory. He was ſilent. We went to prayer, and I left him that night, with his good wiſhes, and thanks.

I viſited

I viſited him ſome weeks, before I could ſee any change, except that he ſaid, that it was his earneſt prayer that he might know theſe things. One night, after I had been at prayer with him, he continued on his knees for ſome time, in ſilent prayer to God; till I was almoſt tired, but at the ſame time much pleaſed. After that, he began to ſpeak with great pleaſure of the Lord Jeſus. I aſked him who he was? He ſaid, with great confidence, he is GOD ALMIGHTY, and I do pray to him, and hope he will ſave me from my ſins. A few days before his departure, I aſked him how it was with his ſoul? He gave me to underſtand, that he wanted to be with Chriſt in glory, for there they were praiſing God and the Lamb. When I ſaw him the night before he died, he ſtill continued happy, and wanted to go to God in heaven, and praiſe the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for his ſins. I aſked him how long it

was ſince he found comfort in the Lord? he ſaid about a month or three weeks ago. I went to prayer with him for the laſt time, and a ſweet time it was to my ſoul. I left him praying for me, that I might be with God in glory, and with a thankful heart for what he had received. He died a very few hours after, and I have no reaſon to doubt but his ſoul is now with our God and Saviour in glory. O what a Saviour is Chriſt Jeſus! who can, and will ſupport and comfort a ſoul in its laſt moments, and *make him more than conqueror over death, through him that loved him.*

* Our Liturgic prayers, in the Viſitation of the Sick, ſpeak very expreſsly of this experimental knowledge, and ſolemnly intreat the Almighty Lord, before whom heaven and earth bow, and obey, to make the ſick man "KNOW and FEEL "that there is none other name under "heaven

" heaven given to man, in whom and
" through whom he can receive health
" and ſalvation, but only the name of
" our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

Enquiring minds will eventually be ſatisfied, and ſeeking ſouls find help. There is plenteous redemption with our God—there is abounding grace in Chriſt Jeſus. *He is able to ſave to the utmoſt, all that come unto God by him*; and he has declared his willingneſs, in the moſt expreſs and unequivocal terms—*Whoſoever cometh, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Nor has he hidden the meritorious cauſe of our ſalvation: *his blood cleanſeth from all ſin*, and *his righteouſneſs juſtifieth from all things.* Hail! happy ſouls! who have this Lord for their God. No guilt can exceed the merit of his blood; no ſin withſtand the power of his grace. Death muſt lay by its terrors, and the grave, finally, unbar its doors; for, he is *Death's Death, and the grave's deſtruction.*

LETTER X.

REV. SIR,

AT your requeſt I viſited Mrs. C. in J. Buildings, and found her in that ſituation which her friend's letter repreſented to you. Herſelf and her room were clean, but, in this very cold ſeaſon, ſhe had no fire, no victuals, no money nor friend; but, as ſhe ſaid, her God; adding, I find my God can ſend me help in my diſtreſs which I knew not of; and, which is more to my comfort, as an anſwer to my prayer, for I was calling upon him, to undertake for me, in this diſtreſſing ſituation, and he has heard, and anſwered. She then told me many of her trials, from the deceaſe of her huſband, before which ſhe had lived in very good circumſtances. Poverty had now conſtrained her to pledge all the things ſhe could

could poſſibly diſpenſe with, even to the not leaving herſelf a change of raiment. On which ſhe obſerved, *God has done all things well: ſhall I receive good, and not evil!* I viſited her ſeveral times, and always found her aſcribing *Glory to God*, for his dealings with her. "Though provi- "dences are croſs, ſays ſhe, his purpoſes "are ſure; and it is in mercy to my ſoul." No miſer could be more diligent in peruſing the will of a deceaſed friend, than this afflicted woman in the peruſal of her heavenly Father's. She had there, according to her own words, ſo many precious legacies, by which ſhe had been ſupported; and conſidered them as an earneſt of greater in reverſion. Pointing to, and ſpeaking of them at different times, ſhe would ſay, ſee here, what my God can do for me, who am *unworthy of the leaſt of his mercies*. This ſhe often expreſſed with tears of gratitude. None could be favoured with ſtronger faith un-

der ſuch ſevere trials. This Scripture was indeed fulfilled, *As thy day is, ſhall thy ſtrength be.*

* It is difficult to decide, whether goodneſs and mercy ſhine brighter, in diſcovering pardon to the guilty; or in affording comfort and ſtrength to the diſconſolate and weak. Great latitude was, in this poor woman's caſe, given to poverty and diſeaſe; reſt ſhe had little, acquaintance few, friends and money none. But it pleaſed God to adminiſter conſolation to her mind, and to enable her rather to be thankful and rejoice, than complain and murmur. She had learned the happy leſſon of *caſting her care upon the Lord*; and, *in whatever ſtate ſhe was, therein to be content.* How *great a gain is godlineſs with contentment!*

LET-

LETTER XI.

REV. SIR,

I WAS called in Providence to viſit W. B. New T. ſtreet, Weſtr. who was in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption. He was a remarkably induſtrious man in buſineſs, which he was obliged to give up about three weeks before his deceaſe. When I ſaw him, he ſaid, I am quite confined from my labour, and am waiting for my change, which I am ſure cannot be long, and then I ſhall be with my beſt Friend, who has been my ſupport under all my oppreſſions, who will maintain my cauſe, and is faithful. Three or four days after I viſited him again. As ſoon as I entered his apartment, he would ſcarcely let me ſpeak to him before he took up his Bible, which lay by him; and he opened it at the Firſt Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle of Peter, and read the former part of

of it to the end of the ninth verſe; on which, in connection with the foregoing, he ſpoke with a degree of rejoicing beyond conception for one in his languid ſtate of body, and which he told me had been the greateſt ſupport to his ſoul (ſince laſt I ſaw him) becauſe he found there was *a need*, or neceſſity of being *in heavineſs, through manifold temptations*, for the *trial of his faith*. And now, ſays he, I am about *to receive the end of it, even the ſalvation of my ſoul*. I am ſure my faith has been ſharply tried, but Jeſus is faithful.

As his faith was ſtrong, and he ſeemed to be ſo happy in communion with his God, I aſked him what he thought of the diſſolution of the body; if he had any fears from that quarter? No! ſays he, bleſſed be God, I have not for this month paſt; I am waiting for his meſſenger to give a diſcharge from this warfare. What cauſe

cauſe can I have to be afraid of a friend that will be the means of my admiſſion into his preſence, where all theſe ſurrounding difficulties and troubles will be done away? I went to ſpeak comfortably to him, as I knew his only hope and dependence for ſalvation was upon what Jeſus Chriſt had done and ſuffered; but the Lord had determined that he ſhould be an inſtrument of confirming me in the faith, more eſpecially by this profitable opportunity on the near approach of his diſſolution.

The third and laſt time I ſaw him was the day before his death. I found one of his children, who was dying when I was with him before, laid out a corpſe at the foot of his bed. Pointing to it, he ſaid, I ſhall ſoon be in that ſtate. I deſire he may lie there, and remain 'till we both go to one grave. In the ſame grave they were depoſited.

At this time I found him ſitting up in his bed, with great difficulty fetching his breath, and in great pain. I ſpoke to him of the precioufneſs of that *Prince of Peace*, who alone can calm the troubled mind, and mitigate the pain of ſtruggling nature. He replied, yes, yes! He can, He has and he will, in the *laſt* ſtruggle; for he is Jesus. I took my leave of him with prayer and praiſing the dear Redeemer, for the ſupporting grace he afforded him, in theſe trying circumſtances. Shaking hands with him at parting, and wiſhing him the preſence of the Lord Jeſus in his laſt moments; he replied, God bleſs you, and immediately, as I left him, told his wife and a friend with her, that he ſhould ſee my face no more in the fleſh. I muſt not omit the words he uttered to his wife four minutes before his diſſolution. "I ſhall be with him whom my ſoul loveth in a few minutes, whoſe chariot is paved with love; to him I com-

I commend you and my two children, with this charge, *Don't forget the beſt of friends*, JESUS."

* There are few paſſages in Holy Writ which convey more real pathos, or more genuine friendſhip, (Mark 11, 19. Luke 7, 34.) than that which is ſpoken by our Lord at the inſtitution of his own Supper, " *This do in remembrance of me.*" How apt are poor guilty mortals to forget their beſt friend, and only Saviour, and to be led aſtray by the trifling, vain or ſinful purſuits of a preſent life! O man! remember Jeſus. With great propriety do ſaved ſinners meet around his table and ſing

What wond'rous cauſe could move thy heart
To take on thee my curſe and ſmart;
Well knowing that my ſoul would be
So cold, ſo negligent of thee!

The

The cauſe was Love! I ſink with ſhame,
Before my ſacred Jeſu's name;
That thou ſhouldſt bleed and ſlaughter'd be,
Becauſe—becauſe thou lovedſt me!

Dr. Peckwell's Hymns, p. 181.

The conſolation which attended theſe two laſt perſons undoubtedly aroſe from the conſiderations, which are piouſly, and not inelegantly expreſſed, in the following Hymn.

I.

When languor and diſeaſe invade
This trembling houſe of clay,
'Tis ſweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away.

II.

Sweet to reflect how Grace divine
My ſins on Jeſus laid;
Sweet to remember that his blood
My debt of ſuffering paid!

III. Sweet

III.

Sweet in his righteouſneſs to ſtand,
Which ſaves from ſecond death;
Sweet to experience, day by day,
His ſpirit's quick'ning breath.

IV.

Sweet on his faithfulneſs to reſt,
Whoſe love can never end;
Sweet on his Covenant of Grace
For all things to depend.

V.

Sweet is the confidence of Faith,
To truſt his firm decrees;
Sweet to lie paſſive in his hands,
And know no will but his.

VI.

If ſuch the ſweetneſs of the ſtreams,
What muſt the fountain be!
Where Saints and Angels draw their bliſs
Immediately from THEE.

This Hymn was ſung at the Anniverſary Meeting and Sermon laſt Year, and is ſubjoined, becauſe it conveys in great meaſure the good wiſhes and prayers of the Benefactors to the Sick Man's Friend.

MY God, how infinitely kind
Art thou, to reconcile my mind
To all thy Sov'reign will!
Content with little I ſhall be,
If I may but converſe with thee,
And have thy preſence ſtill.

II.

Humbly for thoſe I intercede
Who ſuffer poverty and need,
Without contentment given:
O teach them, in their wants, to pray;
To them thy power and grace diſplay,
By ſending bread from heaven.

III. In

III.

In earneſt I would bear in mind,
The poor, the ſick, the long confin'd,
With theſe I ſympathiſe;
To theſe I feel compaſſion move,
To theſe I would appear in love,
And wipe their weeping eyes.

IV.

O may their ſorrows ſweetly lead
Their fainting, hungry ſouls, to feed
On Chriſt, the heav'nly Bread;
So ſhall they patiently endure,
And find their happineſs ſecure,
In him their living head.

A dying bed is a ſerious place. When attended by mercy and grace, a joyful ſituation. But it muſt not be forgotten, that few ſeek the ſalvation of God in death, who have deſpiſed it through life. The Holy Scriptures mention *one*, ſaved in his laſt moments *, that none might

* The dying Thief.

deſpair,

deſpair, and *but one*, that none might preſume.

The caſes recorded in this little pamphlet were ſelected from ſome others, but the whole make a very ſmall proportion of the numbers who have been viſited, and relieved by this charity. Enough, however, to excite our gratitude, and encourage our purſuit. Enough to make us bleſs the day when it was formed; and our God and Saviour, who hath ſo ſignally attended it, with his protection and preſence.

Repentance is the *gift of God*, and a grace of his Spirit. He knows *every plant that he hath planted*, and will water and protect it. From this bleſſing no particular period of life is exempt. The third, the ſixth, the ninth, and the eleventh hour, hath God, ſometimes, diſtinguiſhed by it. So that *young men, and maidens*,

maidens, old men and children, have mingled tears of godly ſorrow, and united in ſongs of godly praiſe. Beds of ſickneſs have been ſanctified to this bleſſed purpoſe. O happy ſickneſs, in which God is thus glorified! O happy fever, that proceedeth not from a *conſuming*, but a *refining* fire!

So long have I been accuſtomed to attend the ſick and dying beds of my fellow creatures, that their pains and ſorrows are my intimate acquaintance, and nothing gives me greater ſatisfaction than being inſtrumental in removing or relieving them *. But my avocations are ſo many,

* In both theſe reſpects God has been exceedingly gracious in accepting my labours. When I was a ſtudent of phyſick in Edinburgh, ſome were edified and made happy. In the country, where I conſtantly exerciſe the healing art, he has made many my debtors for their lives and comforts. If ever my time allow, I ſhall certainly purſue, in an experimental way, a ſtudy which I have never loſt ſight of, and have always extremely delighted in.

and

and my public work in town ſo neceſſarily engaging, that it is only a few retired hours I can ſpend in purſuit of a favourite ſtudy, or in going about to aſſiſt the chambers of diſtreſsful diſeaſe. On a hearty deſire, however, of being uſeful to mankind in theſe moments of miſery, the preſent Society was formed; and is, to this hour, carried on. On this principle I call upon thoſe who are bleſſed with the gifts of Providence, to impart to the afflicted poor a ſmall ſhare of their good things; remembering his covenant and promiſes, whoſe favour is better than life.

To offer *my* thanks to the benefactors of this Society would be needleſs, if not improper. They have more and better than I can expreſs: The widow—the orphan—the laborious poor—load them with thankſgivings and prayers. And the awakened and lately pardoned ſinners employ no ſmall portion of their time at the throne

throne of Grace, to which they have acceſs, in earneſtly imploring that neither they, their children, nor their childrens' children, may ever want the pecuniary or comfortable help they have ſo charitably afforded them. Come, Reader! *caſt in thy mite among us*; in helping theſe ſick poor, *let us all have one purſe.*

At the commencement of this Society in January, 1784, the following paper was diſtributed.

A Society, entitled The Sick Man's Friend, or the Friends of Jeſus and the Poor, united to teſtify their gratitude to Him, and their ſympathy with them, in *viſiting*, *adviſing*, and relieving them under the painful and diſtreſſing hours of ſickneſs.

"*The poor ye have always with you*," ſaith the Lord Jesus Christ.

"*Look ye out men of honeſt report, full of the Holy Ghoſt and wiſdom*, [ſound in doctrine, of real experience, and good reputation] *whom we may appoint over this buſineſs*." The Twelve Apoſtles, Acts vi. 1.

THE objects of this charity are, indiſcriminately, the ſouls and bodies of the Sick Poor. The motives to it, gratitude and love to God and our Saviour, Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt. Perſons, proper to enquire into the truth of diſtreſſing caſes, and to adminiſter to the neceſſities of the ſick, are deſcribed by the Apoſtles. Such, it is humbly hoped, are uniting for theſe humane purpoſes, and meet, at preſent, at the Veſtries of the Chapels of *Tottenham-Court-Road*, and the *New Way*, *Weſtminſter*, on MONDAY evening, at ſeven o'clock: when, and where, Chriſtians of every denomination, who wiſh to act upon theſe principles, and to adopt a conduct conducive to this laudable end, are deſired either to bring, or ſend, whatever they ſhall be induced, by ſuch motives, to give, or to ſubſcribe by the week or month, to render the ſick beds of Poverty leſs diſtreſſing, and more uſeful to the Poor.

LONDON,
January 28, 1784.

At future meetings, it was reſolved that a few general Rules, a Form of Recommendation, and of bequeathing a legacy for the benefit of the Sick Poor, ſhould be adopted and publiſhed.

RULES.

I. Subſcribers and Donors to this Charity, ſhall have the liberty of recommending any, or as many poor ſick objects as they pleaſe. No Steward or Viſitor ſhall receive any fee or reward from the Society, on any pretence whatever.

II. All petitions muſt be ſigned by a ſubſcriber or donor to the Society, and directed to the ſtewards or viſitors. The ſick poor to be viſited, and, if neceſſity require, *immediately* relieved, with not more than four ſhillings at any one time.

III. Every perſon deſirous of becoming a viſitor, ſhall be recommended by one of the ſtewards or viſitors, and his ſentiments

ments, experience and conduct enquired into—a man of ſound doctrine, real experience, and good report.

IV. Twelve ſtewards ſhall be choſen annually. Two or more of the ſtewards are to meet on Monday evenings, at ſeven o'clock, in the Veſtries of Tottenham-court Chapel, and the New Way, Weſtminſter, to manage the buſineſs of the Society.

V. Two of the ſtewards, appointed by the reſt ſhall keep the keys of the ſick poor's box; and the box be kept at the houſe of another ſteward, until it ſhall be thought proper or neceſſary to appoint a Treaſurer.—An annual general meet ng ſhall be held, wherein accounts ſhall be reported to the Society at large, and a collection made for the benefit of the ſick poor.

VI. All meetings of this Society ſhall be carried on, with prayer and thankſgiving to him "*who is the giver of every good!*

good and perfect gift; whose mercy and protection shall be intreated, and to his grace and providence the sick poor be mended, who may apply for relief.

*** The Secretaries in the absence of a Steward shall be permitted to act as one.

FORM of RECOMMENDATION.

Our Father, who is in Heaven,
Maketh his Sun to rise on the EVIL *and on the* GOOD, *and sendeth rain on the* JUST *and on the* UNJUST.—Mat. v. 45.

The SICK POOR of every sect, party, name and nation under heaven, are the objects of the charity, entitled

The SICK MAN's FRIEND.

I recommend

who is poor, sick, and has applied for relief; I therefore request may be visited, case enquired into, and if a real object, relieved.

To

N. B. This Recommendation muſt be ſigned by a Subſcriber or Donor.

Donations and Subſcriptions to this Charity may be paid on *Monday* evenings, at the Veſtries of Tottenham-court Chapel, and the New Way Chapel, Weſtminſter: or to Mr. *Shrapnell*, ſilverſmith, *Charing-croſs*; Mr. *Engliſh*, hoſier, *Strand*; Mr. *Rouſe*, grocer, *Wigmore-ſtreet*, *Cavendiſh-ſquare*; or to the Secretaries, Mr. *Harriſon*, No. 110, *Portland-ſtreet*, for the diſtrict of *Tottenham-court*; and Mr. *Baſnet*, hoſier, *Tothil-ſtreet*, for the diſtrict of *Weſtminſter*.

A Form to be followed by any perſon who ſhall be inclined by his Laſt Will to bequeath a legacy to this Charity.

"Item, I give and bequeath unto A. B. and C. D. the ſum of
upon truſt, to the intent that they, or one of

of them, do pay the ſame to the Treaſurer or Stewards (for the time being) of of a Society, who now call themſelves *The Sick Man's Friend*; inſtituted in the year 1784, which do, or did lately meet at the Veſtries of Tottenham-court Chapel, and the New Way Chapel, Weſtminſter; which ſaid ſum I deſire may be applied towards carrying on the charitable deſigns of the ſaid Society.

Giving land, or money, or ſtock, by will, with directions to be laid out in the purchaſe of any eſtate for the benefit of any Charity, will be void by the Statute of Mortmain; but money or ſtock may be given by will, without being directed to be laid out.

STEWARDS for the Year 1786.

HENRY PECKWELL, D.D.	DAVID PARKER, Eſq;
S. FOYSTER, Eſq;	DANIEL WEST, Eſq;
Mr. SMITH.	Mr. RUSSELL.
Mr. ENGLISH,	Mr. HODGKINSON.
Mr. WARNER.	Mr. JEFFRIES.
Mr. ELLIOT.	Mr. HARRISON.

GENERAL ACCOUNT for the Year 1784.

To ſundry Gifts and Subſcriptions received at Tottenham-Court and Weſtminſter,	£.	296	11	2		
By ſundry Supplies afforded to the ſick Poor,	£.	281	17	10		
By Expences of Box, Books, Printing, &c.		9	14	9		
By Balance in the Tottenham-court Box,		3	9	3		
By Ditto at Weſtminſter		1	9	4		
	£.	296	11	2		

In this year, the poor perſons who were relieved amounted to 492. They were viſited 2049 times. The ſum given to them, as appears above, was £. 281 17 10.

GE-

GENERAL ACCOUNT for the Year 1785.

To Balance brought forward,	£.	4	18	7	By ſundry Supplies afforded he Sick Poor, £.	357	4	8
To ſundry Gifts and Subſcriptions at Tottenham-court and Weſtminſter,		365	19	11	By Expences, - -	4	12	0
					By Balance in the Tottenham-Court Box, - -	10	6	0
					By Ditto in the Weſtminſter Box, - - -	1	15	10
		373	18	6		373	18	6

In this year, 774 perſons were relieved. They were viſited 2779 times.
The ſum given amounted to £. 357 4 8.

From

From hence it appears, that twelve hundred and ſixty-ſix ſick perſons have received ſupport in theſe two years; diſtributed, not in large ſums, at one time, that might tempt to extravagance or intemperance; but in ſmall ſums, adapted to prevent neceſſity. No leſs than four thouſand eight hundred and twenty-eight viſits were paid them, by honeſt, attentive, ſerious men, who ſeek no honour in this buſineſs but that which cometh from God; and no gain, but what ariſes from ſerving the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the teſtimony of a good conſcience, and the comfort of adminiſtering relief to the needy, advice to the ignorant, and recommending to the guilty Him, *who taketh away the ſins of the world.*

This little Tract muſt not cloſe without acknowledging that this Charity is greatly indebted to the Rev. Dr. Smyth, the Rector of St. Giles's, for the uſe of

his pulpit and church; and to the benevolent inhabitants of that pariſh, for a very generous collection. To the ingenious artiſt, who gratuitouſly adorned it with a frontiſpiece, and to all who have contributed ſupport and protection to the *Sick Man's Friend*, it returns moſt hearty thanks.

It muſt, laſt of all, ſollicit thee, Chriſtian Reader! out of thine abundance, to add to the comforts, or, out of thy comforts, to relieve the neceſſities of thy fellow-creatures.

James-ſtreet, Weſtminſter,
1ſt Auguſt, 1786.

* This collection will come into the account of the year 1786. It is much to be wiſhed, that other churches and chapels would follow this laudable example; the pariſhes are greatly benefited by this charity.

7 JU 86

FINIS.

GENERAL ACCOUNT for the Year 1786.

To Balance brought forward	£.	12	1	10		
To ſundry Gifts and Subſcriptions at Tottenham-court and Weſtminſter		469	17	10		
	£.	481	19	8		
By ſundry Supplies afforded the Sick Poor					£. 450	12	0
By Expences					8	16	0
By Balance in the Tottenham-court Box					20	19	10
By ditto in the Weſtminſter Box					1	11	10
					£. 481	19	8

7 JU66

In this year 957 perſons were relieved. They were viſited 3521 times.
The ſum given amounted to £. 450 12 0

GENERAL ACCOUNT

To Balance brought forward	£.22	11	8
To ſundry Gifts and Subſcriptions at Tottenham-court and Weſtminſter - -	697	2	0
	£.719	13	8

In this year 1094 perſons were relieved.

for the Year 1787.

By ſundry ſupplies afforded the Sick Poor -	£. 498	12	4
By the Diſpenſary in Rathbone Place, Rent, &c. -	38	14	0
By Subſcription to the Weſtminſter Diſpenſary -	10	10	0
By printing 1000 Books of the Society - -	15	19	0
By printing 2000 Sermons, blank Letters, and Cards; Books, Paper, Advertiſements, and other Expences at Tottenham-court and Weſtminſter	38	0	8
By Balance in the Tottenham-court Box - -	69	17	0
By ditto in the Weſtminſter Box - - -	48	0	8
	£. 719	13	8

The ſum given amounted to £. 480 12 4

STEWARDS for the Year 1787.

H. Peckwell, D.D.	D. Parker, Esq.
D. West, Esq.	F. Waring, Esq.
S. Foyster, Esq.	Mr. Shrapnell,
Mr. English,	Mr. Gearey,
Mr. Smith,	Mr. Willett,
Mr. Williams,	Mr. Yockney,
Mr. Roberts,	Mr. Jaffrays.

MANAGERS of the SOCIETY.

Daniel West, Esq.
Robert Keen, Esq.
Dr. Ford.

STEWARDS for the Year 1788.

D. West, Esq.	Dr. Benamore,
D. Parker, Esq.	Mr. Willett,
F. Foyster, Esq.	Mr. Williams,
Mr. English,	Mr. Roberts,
Mr. Smith,	Mr. Bensley,
Mr. Yockney,	Mr. Warren,
Mr. Moore,	Mr. Jaffrays.

7 JU66

For WESTMINSTER.

F. Waring, Esq.
Mr. Shrapnell,
Mr. Gearey.